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EXAMINER
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2449	

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/624,445	COX, ALAN
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	ASHOK B. PATEL	2449	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *21 October 2009*.
2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☐ This action is non-final.
3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-30* is/are pending in the application.
    4a) Of the above claim(s) *1,4-7 and 9-17* is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6)☒ Claim(s) *2,3,8 and 18-30* is/are rejected.
7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.
    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:
      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-30 are subject to examination. Claims 1, 4-7 and 9-17 have been

cancelled.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed 10/21//2009 have been fully considered but they are

not persuasive for the following reasons:

Applicant's argument:

The Examiner cites Hickey at paragraph [0015] as teaching, "It is still a further aspect of the invention to provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of an,/changes in status information of received electronic communications, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses." (emphasis added). Hickey describes several ways of "updating and notifying", none of which include *"providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status"* as required by claims 18 and 26.

For example, as the Examiner points out, paragraph [0040] of Hickey teaches notifying by forwarding/directing electronic communications to a selected mailbox other than the common mailbox. Other members would be "notified" of a status change by observing the message in the selected mailbox. However, it should be noted that this forwarding/directing is in response to an automatic rules-based algorithm, and not in response to approval/rejection by an approver of a message that was routed to the user, as claims 18 and 26 require. Further, no indicator is used for this type of notification.

Examiner's Note from the Applicant's response dated 08/06/2007:

""[i]t should be understood that the current invention is not limited to situations in

which some form of synchronization is used or required.",

"Nothing in the specification implies that synchronization is an essential element

regarding notification. Nothing in the specification explicitly precludes other forms of

notifying.",

"Further, paragraph [0025] describes a child receiving notice when messages are rejected. The specification therefore clearly describes notification of electronic message status in forms other than through synchronization."

No arguments are provided for the claims rejected under Claims 2, 3,8 and 18-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lu (US 2002/0107950 A1) in view of Bulfer at al. (hereinafter Bulfer) (US 2006/0036701 A1), and further in view of Sherman et al (hereinafter Sherman)(US 2002/0194177 A1)

Examiner's response:

Hickey teaches at para. [0040] "Any member of the group 22A1 can define one or more alternate delivery instructions for the one or more inbound electronic communications 53A1. For example, each member of group 22A1 can specify a match criteria in a criteria template and then define in a notification specification rules to execute in when inbound electronic communications 53A1 satisfies the match criteria. The rules can prescribe, for example, an automated response or automated forwarding or directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications 53A1 to **a selected mailbox** other than the default inbox 50A1 of the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1."

Hickey teaches at para. [0015], "It is still a further aspect of the invention to provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

Hickey teaches at para [0043] "In response to acts by one member of group 22A1 that cause **a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator 57A1 for any other group member viewing the status indicator** 57A11."

Thus, Hickey teaches:

1)   "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or more electronic communications",

2)   "each member of group can specify an automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications to a **selected mailbox** other than the default inbox of the group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then,

3)   "in response to acts by one member of group that cause a status change, **a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator.** ("once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.")

The reasons why Hickey came up with this system and method is stated in para. [0007], "some group members may be deprived of information regarding the received e-mail message and the actions taken by the other group members in connection with the

message. In addition, there is limited control on the flow, distribution and processing of the information intended to be shared among the members of group 22."

Lu discloses a prior art, as stated above, upon which the claimed invention "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message" can be seen as an "improvement". Hickey teaches a prior art comparable to Lu, wherein Hickey discloses 1) "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or more electronic communications", 2) "each member of group can specify an automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications to a **selected mailbox** other than the default inbox of the group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then, 3) "in response to acts by one member of group that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator."

Thus, the manner of enhancing the system and method of Lu was made part of the ordinary capabilities of one skilled in the art based upon the teaching of such improvement in Hickey.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been capable of applying this known "improvement" technique in the same manner to the system and method of Lu and the results would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art, namely, one skilled in the art would have readily recognized that wherein the shared email communication deprives a sharing member of the information on the actions taken by the other member in connection with the changed status of the message,

Hickey provides the technique showing that "once the electronic message is acted upon

by a first group member, notifying the at least one other member of a changed status

for the electronic message. Thus, the claimed invention would have been obvious to

include "provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a

group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications, the

received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple

members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in
> section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are
> such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person
> having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the
> manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claims 2, 3, 8 , 18, 23-25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Lu (US 2002/0107950 A1) in view of Hickey et al. (hereinafter

Hickey) (us 2002/0087646 A1)

Referring to claim 18,

Lu teaches a method for operating an electronic messaging system (Fig. 1a)

comprising: routing an electronic message intended for a first user (Fig. 1a, element

150) to at least two human approvers, wherein each of the at least two human

approvers maintains an independent copy of the routed electronic message, wherein

each of the at least two human approvers can approve or reject the electronic message

prior to the electronic message being routed to the first user (Fig. 1a, element 160, page

2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, <u>an electronic message may be **directed to one or more**</u>

<u>supervisory recipients 160.</u>");

presenting the electronic message to at least one of the approvers for approval

or rejection (Abstract," A message screening system includes routing to a supervisory

recipient an electronic message directed to an intended recipient. The supervisory

recipient then is allowed to screen the electronic message by approving or rejecting the

electronic message. The electronic message then is forwarded to the intended recipient

if the electronic message is approved by the supervisory recipient.")

determining whether the electronic message is approved or rejected by applying

a predetermined policy toward approval or rejection actions by the at least one of the

approvers presented with the electronic message; routing the electronic message to the

first user if the electronic message is approved (page 2, para.[0023], "The message

screening system may be configured to automatically screen an electronic message.

For example, lists of approved or blocked senders 110 may be stored at supervisory

recipient 160, or otherwise, to enable automatic screening of predesignated message

types or sender identifications. In one implementation, during the screening process,

the sender 110 may be added to the lists of approved or blocked senders by the

supervisory recipient 160. In another implementation, the MS server 140 may compare

the electronic address of sender 110 to the list of approved or blocked senders 110 and,

based on the comparison, either forward the message, reject the message, or allow

supervisory recipient 160 to screen this message of senders 110 personally, or

otherwise. <u>Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory</u>

<u>recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key.</u> Approval also may be a default condition that is presumed to exist after a certain time period of inaction by supervisory recipient 160 after receiving the electronic message. In general, MS server 140 generally forwards the electronic message to intended recipient 150.")

Although Lu <u>clearly</u> teaches at page 2, para.[0016], "For example, intended and supervisory recipients 150, 160 may include personal computer systems or other electronic devices such as a pager, a personal digital assistant, or a wireless telephone for communicating electronic messages.", and at page 2, para.[0022] "Supervisory recipient 160 may be provided with a viewing screen having one or more control panels that allow supervisory recipient to approve or reject the electronic message for receipt by intended recipient 150.",and [0023]," <u>Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key.</u>", Lu fails to teach "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.

Hickey teaches at para. [0040] "<u>Any member of the group 22A1 can define one or more alternate delivery instructions for the one or more inbound electronic communications 53A1</u>. For example, each member of group 22A1 can specify a match criteria in a criteria template and then define in a notification specification rules to execute in when inbound electronic communications 53A1 satisfies the match criteria.

The rules can prescribe, for example, an automated response or automated forwarding or <u>directing one or more electronic communications</u> from the received electronic communications 53A1 to **a selected mailbox** <u>other than the default inbox 50A1</u> of the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1."

Hickey teaches at para. [0015], "It is still a further aspect of the invention <u>to provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications</u>, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

Hickey teaches at para [0043] "In response to acts by one member of group 22A1 that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator 57A1 for any other group member viewing the status indicator 57A11."

Thus, Hickey teaches:

1)   "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or more electronic communications",

2)   "each member of group can specify an automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications to a **selected mailbox** other than the default inbox of the group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then,

3)   "in response to acts by one member of group that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator. ("once the electronic message is approved or

rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status

for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one

other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the

electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.")

The reasons why Hickey came up with this system and method is stated in para.

[0007], "some group members may be deprived of information regarding the received e-

mail message and the actions taken by the other group members in connection with the

message. In addition, there is limited control on the flow, distribution and processing of

the information intended to be shared among the members of group 22."

Lu discloses a prior art, as stated above, upon which the claimed invention "once

the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least

one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message" can be seen as an

"improvement". Hickey teaches a prior art comparable to Lu, wherein Hickey discloses

1)   "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or

more electronic communications", 2)   "each member of group can specify an

automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received

electronic communications to a **selected mailbox** other than the default inbox of the

group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then, 3) "in response to acts by one

member of group that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the

associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator."

Thus, the manner of enhancing the system and method of Lu was made part of the ordinary capabilities of one skilled in the art based upon the teaching of such improvement in Hickey.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been capable of applying this known "improvement" technique in the same manner to the system and method of Lu and the results would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art, namely, one skilled in the art would have readily recognized that wherein the shared email communication deprives a sharing member of the information on the actions taken by the other member in connection with the changed status of the message, Hickey provides the technique showing that "once the electronic message is acted upon by a first group member, notifying the at least one other member of a changed status for the electronic message. Thus, the claimed invention would have been obvious to include "provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

Referring to claim 23,

Lu teaches the method of claim 18, wherein the electronic message is routed to the first user upon by being routed to a folder, accessible by the first user from multiple devices at multiple locations. (para. [0016] and [0017])

Referring to claim 24,

Lu teaches the method of claim 18, wherein the electronic message is deleted

upon rejection in accordance with the predetermined policy (para. [0021]).

Referring to claim 25,

Lu teaches the method of claim 18, wherein the electronic message is archived

at a location that is inaccessible to the first user upon rejection in accordance with the

predetermined policy (para. [0021]).

Referring to claims 2 and 3,

Lu teaches the method of claim 4418, further comprising applying a filter to the

electronic message, such that the electronic message is approved if the electronic

message passes the filter, and the method of claim 4418, further comprising applying

filter to the electronic message, such that the electronic message is rejected if the

electronic message passes the filter. (para.[0022]-[0024])

Referring to claim 8,

Lu teaches the method of claim 26, further comprising, if delivery of the electronic

message to the intended recipient is approved, sending a notification to the first user.

(para. [0021])

Referring to claim 26,

Lu teaches a method for operating an electronic messaging system (Fig. 1a)

comprising:

directing an electronic message to at least two human approvers, wherein each

of the at least two human approvers maintains an independent copy of the routed

electronic message, wherein each of the at least two human approvers can approve or

reject the electronic message (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients 160</u>.");

presenting the electronic message to at least one of the approvers for approval or rejection (Abstract," A message screening system includes routing to a supervisory recipient an electronic message directed to an intended recipient. The supervisory recipient then is allowed to screen the electronic message by approving or rejecting the electronic message. The electronic message then is forwarded to the intended recipient if the electronic message is approved by the supervisory recipient.")

determining whether the electronic message is approved or rejected by applying a predetermined policy toward approval or rejection actions by the at least one of the approvers presented with the electronic message; routing the electronic message to the first user if the electronic message is approved (page 2, para.[0023], "The message screening system may be configured to automatically screen an electronic message. For example, lists of approved or blocked senders 110 may be stored at supervisory recipient 160, or otherwise, to enable automatic screening of predesignated message types or sender identifications. In one implementation, during the screening process, the sender 110 may be added to the lists of approved or blocked senders by the supervisory recipient 160. In another implementation, the MS server 140 may compare the electronic address of sender 110 to the list of approved or blocked senders 110 and, based on the comparison, either forward the message, reject the message, or allow supervisory recipient 160 to screen this message of senders 110 personally, or otherwise. Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory

recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key. Approval also may be a default condition that is presumed to exist after a certain time period of inaction by supervisory recipient 160 after receiving the electronic message. In general, MS server 140 generally forwards the electronic message to intended recipient 150.")and

Although Lu clearly teaches at page 2, para.[0016], "or example, intended and supervisory recipients 150, 160 may include personal computer systems or other electronic devices such as a pager, a personal digital assistant, or a wireless telephone for communicating electronic messages.", and at page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." Lu is silent in directing an outgoing electronic message having an intended recipient sent by a first user to at least two approvers prior to the electronic message being routed to the intended recipient " and "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.

Hickey teaches at para. [0040] "Any member of the group 22A1 can define one or more alternate delivery instructions for the one or more inbound electronic communications 53A1. For example, each member of group 22A1 can specify a match criteria in a criteria template and then define in a notification specification rules to execute in when inbound electronic communications 53A1 satisfies the match criteria.

The rules can prescribe, for example, an automated response or automated forwarding or <u>directing one or more electronic communications</u> from the received electronic communications 53A1 to **a selected mailbox** <u>other than the default inbox 50A1</u> of the group electronic mailbox 25A1 assigned to group 22A1."

Hickey teaches at para. [0015], "It is still a further aspect of the invention <u>to provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications</u>, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

Hickey teaches at para [0043] "In response to acts by one member of group 22A1 that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator 57A1 for any other group member viewing the status indicator 57A11."

Thus, Hickey teaches:

1)   "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or more electronic communications",

2)   "each member of group can specify an automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications to a **selected mailbox** other than the default inbox of the group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then,

3)   "in response to acts by one member of group that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator. ("once the electronic message is approved or

rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.")

The reasons why Hickey came up with this system and method is stated in para. [0007], "some group members may be deprived of information regarding the received e-mail message and the actions taken by the other group members in connection with the message. In addition, there is limited control on the flow, distribution and processing of the information intended to be shared among the members of group 22."

Lu discloses a prior art, as stated above, upon which the claimed invention "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message" can be seen as an "improvement". Hickey teaches a prior art comparable to Lu, wherein Hickey discloses 1)   "a system and method is provided for multiple users to concurrently share one or more electronic communications", 2)   "each member of group can specify an automated directing one or more electronic communications from the received electronic communications to a **selected mailbox** other than the default inbox of the group electronic mailbox assigned to group." and then, 3) "in response to acts by one member of group that cause a status change, a signal is transmitted to update the associated status indicator for any other group member viewing the status indicator."

Thus, the manner of enhancing the system and method of Lu was made part of the ordinary capabilities of one skilled in the art based upon the teaching of such improvement in Hickey.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been capable of applying this known "improvement" technique in the same manner to the system and method of Lu and the results would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art, namely, one skilled in the art would have readily recognized that wherein the shared email communication deprives a sharing member of the information on the actions taken by the other member in connection with the changed status of the message, Hickey provides the technique showing that "once the electronic message is acted upon by a first group member, notifying the at least one other member of a changed status for the electronic message. Thus, the claimed invention would have been obvious to include "provide an automatic method for updating and notifying members or users of a group of any changes in status information of received electronic communications, the received electronic communications are being continually operated on by multiple members or users of the group to cause changes in their statuses.

5.   Claims 19-21 and 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lu (US 2002/0107950 A1) in view of Hickey et al. (hereinafter Hickey) (us 2002/0087646 A1) as applied to claims 18 and 26, and further in view of Bulfer at al. (hereinafter Bulfer) (US 2006/0036701 A1) .

Referring to claims 19 and 20,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients 160.</u>")(two approvers to approve or reject the electronic messages). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. <u>The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.</u> Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account. Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", Lu fails to teach the method of claim 18, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender

contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124.

Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet E-mail **accounts for parents** and children, it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply "account for parents" and "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables any one of the parents (account for parents) to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve messages and/or senders and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claim 21,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(two approvers to approve

or reject the electronic messages).   Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child.   The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service. Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.   Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key."   Lu fails to teach method of claim 18, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least two approvers approve the electronic message, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message.   In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for

approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet <u>E-mail accounts for parents and children,</u> it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of "approval folder" and "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set up of their email accounts, as suggested by Lu, to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve or reject messages and/or senders wherein message screening can be conducted by either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts (wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least two approvers approve the electronic message, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message) and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claims 27 and 28,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients 160</u>.")(two approvers to approve or reject the electronic messages). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. <u>The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.</u> Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account. Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", Lu fails to teach the method of claim 26, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender

contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124.

Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet E-mail **accounts for parents** and children, it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply "account for parents" and "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables any one of the parents (account for parents) to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve messages and/or senders and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claim 29,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to one or more supervisory recipients 160.")(two approvers to approve

or reject the electronic messages).   Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child.   The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service. Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.   Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key."   Lu fails to teach method of claim 26, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least two approvers approve it, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para. [0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer

teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet <u>E-mail accounts for parents and children,</u> it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of "approval folder" and "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set up of their email accounts, as suggested by Lu, to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve or reject messages and/or senders wherein message screening can be conducted by either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts (wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least two approvers approve it, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message) and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

6.   Claims 22 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lu (US 2002/0107950 A1) in view of Hickey et al. (hereinafter Hickey) (us

2002/0087646 A1) as applied to claims 18 and 26, and further in view of Srivastava at

al. (hereinafter Srivastava) (US 6,374,292 B1) .

Referring to claim 22,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para. [0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message

may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(wherein the electronic

message is routed to the at least two approvers). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In

some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended

recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory

recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. The intended recipient and the

supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.

<u>Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique</u>

<u>screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.</u> Alternatively, the

intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at

page 2, para. [0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed

by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." And

accessible by the at least two approvers from multiple devices at multiple locations.

(para. [0016]).

Lu fails to teach "<u>message is being routed to a single folder</u>.

Srivastava teaches at Fig. 3, element 408 and at col. 4, line 52 - 65, "In the

described embodiment, the message store 304 is organized as a set of folders and user

mailboxes. The mailbox 401 is a container for messages where each user has an inbox

402 where new mail arrives, and can have one or more folders 404 where mail can be

stored. Folders 404 may contain other folders or mailboxes and may be arranged in a hierarchical tree. Mailboxes owned by an individual user are private folders 406. In addition to a user owning a folder or a mailbox, a common user or group can share the ownership of a folder or mailbox as a shared folder 408. A shared folder is similar to an email group, but instead of messages going into each member of the email group's inbox, messages addressed to the shared folder 408 go into a private folder associated with each user." ("message is being routed to a single folder.)

Lu discloses a prior art, as stated above, upon which the claimed invention "message is being routed to a single folder." can be seen as an "improvement". Srivastava teaches a prior art comparable to Lu, wherein Srivastava discloses "In addition to a user owning a folder or a mailbox, a common user or group can share the ownership of a folder or mailbox as a shared folder 408."("message is being routed to a single folder." Thus, the manner of enhancing the system and method of Lu was made part of the ordinary capabilities of one skilled in the art based upon the teaching of such improvement in Srivastava.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been capable of applying this known "improvement" technique in the same manner to the system and method of Lu and the results would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art, namely, one skilled in the art would have readily recognized that wherein the shared email communication deprives a sharing member of the information on the actions taken by the other member in connection with the changed status of the message,

Srivastava provides the technique of placing the massage in the single folder that is "

shared folder.

Referring to claim 30,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para. [0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message

may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(wherein the electronic

message is routed to the at least two approvers). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In

some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended

recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory

recipient may be a guardian for the minor child.   The intended recipient and the

supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.

<u>Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique</u>

<u>screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.</u> Alternatively, the

intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at

page 2, para. [0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed

by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." And

accessible by the at least two approvers from multiple devices at multiple locations.

(para. [0016]).

Lu fails to teach "<u>message is being routed to a single folder</u>.

Srivastava teaches at Fig. 3, element 408 and at col. 4, line 52 - 65, "In the

described embodiment, the message store 304 is organized as a set of folders and user

mailboxes. The mailbox 401 is a container for messages where each user has an inbox

402 where new mail arrives, and can have one or more folders 404 where mail can be

stored. Folders 404 may contain other folders or mailboxes and may be arranged in a hierarchical tree. Mailboxes owned by an individual user are private folders 406. In addition to a user owning a folder or a mailbox, a common user or group can share the ownership of a folder or mailbox as a shared folder 408. A shared folder is similar to an email group, but instead of messages going into each member of the email group's inbox, messages addressed to the shared folder 408 go into a private folder associated with each user." ("message is being routed to a single folder.)

Lu discloses a prior art, as stated above, upon which the claimed invention "message is being routed to a single folder." can be seen as an "improvement". Srivastava teaches a prior art comparable to Lu, wherein Srivastava discloses "In addition to a user owning a folder or a mailbox, a common user or group can share the ownership of a folder or mailbox as a shared folder 408."("message is being routed to a single folder." Thus, the manner of enhancing the system and method of Lu was made part of the ordinary capabilities of one skilled in the art based upon the teaching of such improvement in Srivastava.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been capable of applying this known "improvement" technique in the same manner to the system and method of Lu and the results would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art, namely, one skilled in the art would have readily recognized that wherein the shared email communication deprives a sharing member of the information on the actions taken by the other member in connection with the changed status of the message,

Srivastava provides the technique of placing the massage in the single folder that is "

shared folder.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

7.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

8.   Claims 2, 3,8 and 18-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Lu (US 2002/0107950 A1) in view of Bulfer at al. (hereinafter Bulfer)

(US 2006/0036701 A1), and further in view of Sherman et al (hereinafter Sherman)(US

2002/0194177 A1)

Referring to claim 18,

Lu teaches a method for operating an electronic messaging system (Fig. 1a)

comprising:

routing an electronic message intended for a first user (Fig. 1a, element 150) to

at least two human approvers, wherein each of the at least two human approvers

maintains an independent copy of the routed electronic message, wherein each of the

at least two human approvers can approve or reject the electronic message prior to the

electronic message being routed to the first user (Fig. 1a, element 160, page 2,

para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to one or more

supervisory recipients 160.");

presenting the electronic message to at least one of the approvers for approval

or rejection (Abstract," A message screening system includes routing to a supervisory

recipient an electronic message directed to an intended recipient. The supervisory

recipient then is allowed to screen the electronic message by approving or rejecting the

electronic message. The electronic message then is forwarded to the intended recipient

if the electronic message is approved by the supervisory recipient.")

determining whether the electronic message is approved or rejected by applying

a predetermined policy toward approval or rejection actions by the at least one of the

approvers presented with the electronic message; routing the electronic message to the

first user if the electronic message is approved (page 2, para.[0023], "The message

screening system may be configured to automatically screen an electronic message.

For example, lists of approved or blocked senders 110 may be stored at supervisory

recipient 160, or otherwise, to enable automatic screening of predesignated message

types or sender identifications. In one implementation, during the screening process,

the sender 110 may be added to the lists of approved or blocked senders by the

supervisory recipient 160. In another implementation, the MS server 140 may compare

the electronic address of sender 110 to the list of approved or blocked senders 110 and,

based on the comparison, either forward the message, reject the message, or allow

supervisory recipient 160 to screen this message of senders 110 personally, or

otherwise. <u>Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory</u>

<u>recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key.</u> Approval also may be a

default condition that is presumed to exist after a certain time period of inaction by

supervisory recipient 160 after receiving the electronic message. In general, MS server

140 generally forwards the electronic message to intended recipient 150.")

Although Lu <u>clearly</u> teaches at page 2, para.[0016], "For example, intended and

supervisory recipients 150, 160 may include personal computer systems or other

electronic devices such as a pager, a personal digital assistant, or a wireless telephone

for communicating electronic messages.", and at page 2, para.[0022] "Supervisory

recipient 160 may be provided with a viewing screen having one or more control panels

that allow supervisory recipient to approve or reject the electronic message for receipt

by intended recipient 150.",and [0023]," <u>Approval may include a manual procedure</u>

<u>performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a</u>

<u>key."</u>, Lu is silent in "presenting a message in Approval folder" and "once the electronic

message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other

approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes

providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other

approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed

status.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series

of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an

exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box

204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a,

e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c

results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. ("presenting a message in Approval folder"").

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply "display depicting approval folder" (Fig. 3) of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables the parents to individually (one or more supervisory recipients 160) bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve messages and/or senders and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

However, both references, Lu and Bulfer fail to teach "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, "presenting a message in Approval folder" and "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.

Sherman teaches in Fig. 8A and 8B and para.[0059], viewing of listing of messages by folders. Also Sherman teaches the subfolder synchronization at para.[0065]. Also Sherman teaches that synchronization can be between server and any of the user devices at Fig. 4 at folder or subfolder level of the any of the folder level

as depicted in Fig. 5. Sherman teaches at para.[0045]," The folder hierarchy illustrated

in FIG. 5 represents a typical hierarchy that is created by the user on a server or

desktop computer. When the user connects a companion device (such as an H/PC) to

the server or desktop computer, a subset or the entire set of folders may be

synchronized between the two systems. In order to identify which folders are to be

synchronized, a flag or electronic code is set on a parent folder. That is, an "expanded"

flag, which is set on a folder, pertains to the subfolder list of that folder and means that

its subfolders will be synchronized. In this manner, the subfolders themselves are not

necessarily individually marked in any way.", and at para.[0075]," In another example, a

user may be provided with a GUI screen or other UI methodology to explicitly select

subfolders that are to be excluded from the synchronization process."("notifying the at

least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the

notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be

associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator

characterizing the changed status.")

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at

the time the invention was made to apply the 'folder" and/or "subfolder level"

synchronization" for the mail objects on user owned PC and its companion devices (a

companion device (such as an H/PC) to the server or desktop computer, a subset or the

entire set of folders may be synchronized between the two systems. In order to identify

which folders are to be synchronized, a flag or electronic code is set on a parent folder.)

to the combined teachings of Lu and Bulfer such that the only required "folder" or

"subfolder", such as Bulfer's "approval folder", can be synchronized among the various

approval display devices used by more than one parent recipients of Lu.

The advantage is that one parent would immediately know what the other parent

approved thereby not repeating the approval action.

Referring to claims 19 and 20,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message

may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients 160</u>.")(two approvers to approve

or reject the electronic messages). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some

implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient.

For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient

may be a guardian for the minor child. <u>The intended recipient and the supervisory</u>

<u>recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.</u> Additionally, the

intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names

comprising a single Internet service provider account. Alternatively, the intended

recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", Lu fails to teach

the method of claim 18, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the

electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two

approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the

electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers,

the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series

of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an

exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124.

Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet E-mail **accounts for parents** and children, it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply "account for parents" and "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables any one of the parents (account for parents) to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve messages and/or senders and then the

processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can

be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claim 21

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message

may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(two approvers to approve

or reject the electronic messages).   Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some

implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient.

For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient

may be a guardian for the minor child.   The intended recipient and the supervisory

recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service. <u>Additionally, the</u>

<u>intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names</u>

<u>comprising a single Internet service provider account.</u>   Alternatively, the intended

recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at page 2,

para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by

supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key."   Lu fails to

teach method of claim 18, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the

electronic message is approved when both of the at least <u>two</u> approvers approve the

electronic message, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects

the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series

of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an

exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box

204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a,

e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c

results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender

contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for

approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer

teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in

conjunction with Internet E-mail accounts for parents and children, it is understood that

the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging

and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming

messages for a supervised user." (rejected when either one of the at least two

approvers rejects the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at

the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of "approval folder" and

"presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a

screen display enables either both the parents or any one of the parents depending

upon the set up of their email accounts, as suggested by Lu, to bring up the "approval

folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve or reject messages and/or senders

wherein message screening can be conducted by either both the parents or any one of

the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts (wherein, in accordance with

the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least

two approvers approve the electronic message, and rejected when either one of the at

least two approvers rejects the electronic message) and then the processed messages

are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the

child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claim 22,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message

may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(wherein the electronic

message is routed to the at least two approvers). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In

some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended

recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory

recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. The intended recipient and the

supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.

<u>Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique</u>

<u>screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.</u> Alternatively, the

intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at

page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed

by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." And

accessible by the at least two approvers from multiple devices at multiple locations.

(para.[0016]).

Lu fails to teach "<u>message is being routed to a single folder</u>.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series

of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an

exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box

204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a,

e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c

results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender

contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for

approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer

teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in

conjunction with Internet E-mail accounts for parents and children, it is understood that

the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging

and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming

messages for a supervised user." ("message is being routed to a single folder.")

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at

the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of apply "account for parents",

"approval folder" and   "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the

teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables either both the parents or any one of

the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts, as suggested by Lu, to

bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve or reject

messages and/or senders wherein message screening can be conducted by either

both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email

accounts and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that

approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added

to the control list.

Referring to claim 23,

Lu teaches the method of claim 18, wherein the electronic message is routed to the

first user upon by being routed to a folder, accessible by the first user from multiple

devices at multiple locations. (para. [0016] and [0017])

Referring to claim 24,

Lu teaches the method of claim 18, wherein the electronic message is deleted

upon rejection in accordance with the predetermined policy (para. [0021]).

Referring to claim 25,

Lu teaches the method of claim 18, wherein the electronic message is archived

at a location that is inaccessible to the first user upon rejection in accordance with the

predetermined policy (para. [0021]).

Referring to claims 2 and 3,

Lu teaches the method of claim 4418, further comprising applying a filter to the

electronic message, such that the electronic message is approved if the electronic

message passes the filter, and the method of claim 4418, further comprising applying

filter to the electronic message, such that the electronic message is rejected if the

electronic message passes the filter. (para.[0022]-[0024])

Referring to claim 8,

Lu teaches the method of claim -1-524, further comprising, if delivery of the

electronic message to the intended recipient is approved, sending a notification to

the first user. (para. [0021])

Referring to claim 26,

Lu teaches a method for operating an electronic messaging system (Fig. 1a) comprising:

directing an electronic message to at least two human approvers, wherein each of the at least two human approvers maintains an independent copy of the routed electronic message, wherein each of the at least two human approvers can approve or reject the electronic message (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients 160</u>.");

presenting the electronic message to at least one of the approvers for approval or rejection (Abstract," A message screening system includes routing to a supervisory recipient an electronic message directed to an intended recipient. The supervisory recipient then is allowed to screen the electronic message by approving or rejecting the electronic message. The electronic message then is forwarded to the intended recipient if the electronic message is approved by the supervisory recipient.")

determining whether the electronic message is approved or rejected by applying a predetermined policy toward approval or rejection actions by the at least one of the approvers presented with the electronic message; routing the electronic message to the first user if the electronic message is approved (page 2, para.[0023], "The message screening system may be configured to automatically screen an electronic message. For example, lists of approved or blocked senders 110 may be stored at supervisory recipient 160, or otherwise, to enable automatic screening of predesignated message types or sender identifications. In one implementation, during the screening process, the sender 110 may be added to the lists of approved or blocked senders by the

supervisory recipient 160. In another implementation, the MS server 140 may compare the electronic address of sender 110 to the list of approved or blocked senders 110 and, based on the comparison, either forward the message, reject the message, or allow supervisory recipient 160 to screen this message of senders 110 personally, or otherwise. Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key. Approval also may be a default condition that is presumed to exist after a certain time period of inaction by supervisory recipient 160 after receiving the electronic message. In general, MS server 140 generally forwards the electronic message to intended recipient 150.")and

Although Lu clearly teaches at page 2, para.[0016], "or example, intended and supervisory recipients 150, 160 may include personal computer systems or other electronic devices such as a pager, a personal digital assistant, or a wireless telephone for communicating electronic messages.", and at page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." Lu is silent in "presenting a message in Approval folder", directing an outgoing electronic message having an intended recipient sent by a first user to at least two approvers prior to the electronic message being routed to the intended recipient " and "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status."

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series

of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an

exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box

204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a,

e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c

results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender

contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for

approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer

teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in

conjunction with Internet E-mail accounts for parents and children, it is understood that

the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging

and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming

messages for a supervised user." ("presenting a message in Approval folder" to at least

one of the approvers for approval or rejection"). Bulfer also teaches at para.[0023]," It is

understood that the "reply to" field can be examined in addition to the sender

field."(directing an outgoing electronic message having an intended recipient prior to the

electronic message being routed to the intended recipient)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at

the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of apply "account for parents",

"approval folder", "presenting a message in Approval folder" and "examining reply to

filed" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables either both the

parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts, as

suggested by Lu, to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and

approve or reject messages and/or senders wherein message screening can be

conducted by either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set

of their email accounts and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail

client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders

can be added to the control list and the approved messages can be sent by the child

after examining "reply to" addresses which can also be added to the control list.

However, both references, Lu and Bulfer fail to teach "once the electronic

message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other

approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes

providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other

approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed

status."

Sherman teaches in Fig. 8A and 8B and para.[0059], viewing of listing of

messages by folders. Also Sherman teaches the subfolder synchronization at

para.[0065]. Also Sherman teaches that synchronization can be between server and

any of the user devices at Fig. 4 at folder or subfolder level of the any of the folder level

as depicted in Fig. 5. Sherman teaches at para.[0045]," The folder hierarchy illustrated

in FIG. 5 represents a typical hierarchy that is created by the user on a server or

desktop computer. When the user connects a companion device (such as an H/PC) to

the server or desktop computer, a subset or the entire set of folders may be

synchronized between the two systems. In order to identify which folders are to be synchronized, a flag or electronic code is set on a parent folder. That is, an "expanded" flag, which is set on a folder, pertains to the subfolder list of that folder and means that its subfolders will be synchronized. In this manner, the subfolders themselves are not necessarily individually marked in any way.", and at para.[0075]," In another example, a user may be provided with a GUI screen or other UI methodology to explicitly select subfolders that are to be excluded from the synchronization process."(updating a display according to a changed status for the electronic message "once the electronic message is approved or rejected by one approver, notifying the at least one other approver of a changed status for the electronic message wherein the notifying includes providing to the at least one other approver an indicator to be associated with the other approver's copy of the electronic message, the indicator characterizing the changed status.")

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the 'folder" and/or "subfolder level" synchronization" for the mail objects on user owned PC and its companion devices (a companion device (such as an H/PC) to the server or desktop computer, a subset or the entire set of folders may be synchronized between the two systems. In order to identify which folders are to be synchronized, a flag or electronic code is set on a parent folder.) to the combined teachings of Lu and Bulfer such that the displays of the only required "folder" or "subfolder", such as Bulfer's "approval folder", can be synchronized among the various approval display devices used by more than one parent recipients of Lu.

The advantage is that one parent would immediately know what the other parent approved thereby not repeating the approval action.

Referring to claims 27 and 28,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients 160</u>.")(two approvers to approve or reject the electronic messages). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. <u>The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service.</u> Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account. Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", Lu fails to teach the method of claim 26, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a,

e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c

results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender

contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for

approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124.

Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown

and described in conjunction with Internet E-mail **accounts for parents** and children, it

is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as

wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user

to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (in accordance with the

predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved or rejected when either one

of the at least two approvers first approves or rejects the electronic message and

wherein, once the electronic message is approved or rejected by either one of the at

least two approvers, the other at least one approver will no longer be presented with the

electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at

the time the invention was made to apply "account for parents" and "presenting a

message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display

enables any one of the parents (account for parents) to bring up the "approval folder"

by choosing the folder to open and approve messages and/or senders and then the

processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages

can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claim 29,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(two approvers to approve or reject the electronic messages). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service. <u>Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.</u> Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." Lu fails to teach method of claim 26, wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least <u>two</u> approvers approve it, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet E-mail accounts for parents and children, it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." (rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message.)

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of "approval folder" and "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set up of their email accounts, as suggested by Lu, to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve or reject messages and/or senders wherein message screening can be conducted by either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts (wherein, in accordance with the predetermined policy, the electronic message is approved when both of the at least two approvers approve it, and rejected when either one of the at least two approvers rejects the electronic message) and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Referring to claim 30,

Although Lu teaches (page 2, para.[0021]," Furthermore, an electronic message may be directed to <u>one or more supervisory recipients</u> 160.")(wherein the electronic message is routed to the at least two approvers). Lu also teaches at para. [0006], "In some implementations, a supervisory recipient may be designated for an intended recipient. For example, the intended recipient may be a minor child and the supervisory recipient may be a guardian for the minor child. The intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have related accounts within an electronic mail service. <u>Additionally, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unique screen names comprising a single Internet service provider account.</u> Alternatively, the intended recipient and the supervisory recipient may have unrelated accounts.", and at page 2, para.[0022] and [0023]," Approval may include a manual procedure performed by supervisory recipient 160 such as entering a command or pressing a key." And accessible by the at least two approvers from multiple devices at multiple locations. (para.[0016]).

Lu fails to teach "<u>message is being routed to a single folder</u>.

Bulfer teaches in Fig. 3 and at para.[0025]," The screen further includes a series of checkboxes 204, for example, for enabling processing of the EPC message. In an exemplary embodiment, the EPC screen display 200 include a delete message box 204a, an EPC box 204b, and an approve box 204c. By activating the delete box 204a, e.g., checking the box, the message will be deleted. Checking the approve box 204c results in the message being forwarded to the child client inbox 112 (FIG. 2), and

checking the EPC box 204b results in the sender becoming an approved sender contained in the EPC list 114 (FIG. 2)." And also Bulfer teaches that the messages for approval be delivered to "Approval Folder", Fig. 2, element 124. Additionally Bulfer teaches at para. [0008], While the invention is primarily shown and described in conjunction with Internet E-mail accounts for parents and children, it is understood that the invention is applicable to message systems in general, such as wireless messaging and voice mail systems, in which it is desired for a supervisory user to filter incoming messages for a supervised user." ("message is being routed to a single folder.")

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of apply "account for parents", "approval folder" and   "presenting a message in Approval folder" of Bulfer to the teachings of Lu such that a screen display enables either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts, as suggested by Lu, to bring up the "approval folder" by choosing the folder to open and approve or reject messages and/or senders wherein message screening can be conducted by either both the parents or any one of the parents depending upon the set of their email accounts and then the processed messages are forwarded to the E-mail client so that approved messages can be accessed by the child and approved senders can be added to the control list.

Conclusion

Examiner's note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant.

Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ASHOK B. PATEL whose telephone number is (571)272-3972. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 am-4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenton Burgess can be reached on (571) 272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/Ashok B. Patel/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2449